

Strengths and Weaknesses of Different Methods of Studying Media Effects

	Content Analysis	Surveys	Experiments	Focus Groups
Strengths	External Validity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify patterns of news coverage Show correlations between media content and public opinion over time 	External validity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generalize findings from representative sample to population "Natural" setting 	Internal validity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying cause-and-effect relationships via random assign. of participants to diff. treatments or no treatment 	Insights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beyond superficial responses How people think How different groups think Social influences
Weaknesses	Internal validity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are correlations due to other agents than media? Ecological fallacy : can't assume that individuals act like the macro public 	Internal validity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying cause-and-effect relationships superficial responses 	External validity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unrepresentativeness of sample laboratory setting unrealistic procedures, stimuli 	External & Internal validity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generalizability of "sample," social dynamics, setting.